MEDIATE
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THE GUIDE

Reaching and Involving People with Mental Disabilities into Non-Formal Adult Education

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Nordplus

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1. Introduction

This guide was developed by the project "Developing competences of Nordic adult educators: reaching and involving vulnerable groups into nonformal adult education", funded by Nordplus Adult programme. The project consortium consists of education providers from Denmark, Iceland, and Sweden, all of which work with people with mental disabilities and possess the necessary experience, relevant to contributing to this all-Nordic solution.

The guide represents a turn-key solution for fostering participation of people with mental disabilities in the nonformal adult education, thereby ultimately ensuring inclusion and increased diversity within Nordic non-formal adult education. The guide is set to strengthen the bridge between the worlds of Nordic non-formal adult education and civil society representing people with mental disabilities.

The purpose of this guide is two-fold; to assist Nordic adult educators in **reaching** and **involving** people with mental disabilities into non-formal adult education by providing comprehensive methods and tools. Furthermore, the guide is designed to support adult educators in planning courses or study circles for people with mental disabilities. Contents include recommendations both on the format and implementation of such courses / study circles.

This guide is intended for use by all Nordic adult educators working with people with different mental disabilities in non-formal adult education. This guide can also be used by associations and NGOs working with different mental disabilities, as well as to public services. The guide is meant to be applicable to the traditional adult education formats of a course, study circle, or educational special event and transferable to different Nordic contexts.

The guide consists of 4 chapters, covering the pathway of engaging people with mental disabilities into non-formal adult education.

The first chapter introduces the challenges the adult education institutions face with regards to reaching and engaging people with mental disabilities into non-formal adult education. The solutions to these, proposed by MEDIATE project consortium, are presented in the subsequent chapters:

The second chapter encompasses progressive methods to reach, attract, involve, motivate, and further engage people with different mental disabilities; these processual methods constitute the complete cycle of making non-formal adult education more inclusive for the target group. An attempt has been made to illustrate the proposed methods with corresponding best practices from the partner countries.

The following chapter 3 complements the methods with practical guidance, containing a tips concerning different aspects of setting up a course for the target group, such as those of group dynamics and supporting skills.

The last chapter provides general organisational recommendations for adjusting non-formal adult education offer to people with mental disabilities.

2. Challenges of engaging vulnerable groups in non-formal adult education

People with mental disabilities make up a broad group whose resources and disabilities vary a lot – both from person to person, but also over time for each individual. Despite this notable variation, a mental and psychiatric diagnosis is often connected to considerable social inequality. Therefore, it is important to be aware of the potential challenges that this group might face when striving to engage them into non-formal adult education.

2.1 Different diagnoses and conditions

The broad target group covers a long list of mental disorders which affects the individual in different ways. Some struggle with one disorder while others battle several, and they bring along a wide range of conditions and challenges that affect their lives. The focus groups carried out in the context of the MEDIATE project dealt with disorders and conditions such as anxiety, depression, bipolar disorder, autism, learning/intellectual disabilities, ADHD, personality disorders, eating disorders and stress.

The disabilities that come along with the different disorders can make it difficult for people to take the initiative to join different non-formal education offers. Even if they join an activity, it can be difficult to ensure a regular attendance as they struggle with issues that prevent them from coming or even leaving their home, for instance anxiety, sleeping problems or depression. It is important to note that different diagnoses require different support, there is no solution that fits all. Adult educators should therefore be attentive to each individual's needs and be willing to provide individual adjustments.

2.2 Working with vulnerable groups and the barriers that prevent them from engaging in non-formal adult education

As mentioned before, the different types of challenges that people with mental disabilities struggle with vary a lot. Therefore, it is important to underscore that the

following paragraphs are mainly based on data collected from the focus groups that have been carried out in Sweden, Iceland and Denmark as a part of the MEDIATE project.

Lack of self-esteem

Many people with mental disabilities have low self-esteem due to mental illness or a lack of proper support. This often hinders them in trying out new things. Even in situations where they really want to, it can be very difficult. It requires a lot of effort and energy to move outside one's comfort zone, as many feels most comfortable in places which they already know.

Lack of trust and strong relations

When working with this target group, a lot of time and effort should be dedicated to build up trust. People with mental disabilities can be insecure about sharing personal thoughts and experiences with others which can make it difficult for them to fully engage in new initiatives. This could be a result of a broken self-image or bad experiences from life, such as humiliation and bullying from former schoolmates, teachers or people they have met. Patience, investment of time and a trustful relation will help them feel comfortable enough to open up and share thoughts, both the good and the bad. It can also help prevent social isolation and help build up a new social network for the individual.

Unreal or insufficient self-image

Some people with mental disabilities struggle with a self-image that does not match reality. This is often the case with people with learning disabilities (and sometimes other vulnerable groups). Some people have a hard time accepting that they are "different" and that they have certain needs. They want to have a formal education to feel "normal" and be like everyone else in the society. It can be difficult for some people to realize that certain considerations or structures are necessary due to their disabilities. **Limited income**

Bad economy and limited income can be a great barrier for vulnerable people. It can be difficult to participate in educational activities that cost money when one depends only on financial support. Sometimes the cost of participating in non-formal educational activities are high, and it means that only a few are able to participate.

Less effective marketing techniques to reach the target group

Many organizations within non-formal adult education fail to reach vulnerable groups with their marketing strategies. The target group is not easily reached and requires additional and/or other communication methods and tools than the ones used to reach the general public. Some people are heavily dependent on their caretakers or healthcare system for information, and the group is not generally digitally competent. Physical presence and meeting people in their daily environment are often needed when wanting to promote the non-formal educational offers. Read more about relevant tools and methods in chapter 3.

3. Innovative integrated methods and tools to reach, involve, and engage vulnerable groups to non-formal adult education

According to WHO, "1 in every 8 people in the world live with some form of mental disorder". The list of most common mental disabilities includes, but are not limited to: anxiety disorders, depression, bipolar disorder, post-traumatic stress disorder, schizophrenia, eating disorders, disruptive behaviour and dissocial disorders, and neurodevelopmental disorders[1].

Although each mental disability requires different adjustments, the general approach to including people with mental disabilities in non-formal adult education is similar and can be summarized into the following stages:

I.   Reaching and attracting people with mental disabilities to non-formal adult education

People with mental disabilities are often the ones living in isolation, having few social contacts and weak network.

II.   Motivating people and involving them to start education

Certain types of mental disabilities require more efforts for people to get involved, both from educational institutions and the people themselves. These includes not only providing them with additional motivation to start the course, but also considering and ensuring different aspects of accessibility when it comes to specific mental disabilities.

III.   Engaging the participants during the educational process

Staying engaged in the educational process is an actual issue that requires different approach when it comes to people with mental disabilities, and not just those with ADHD.

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[1] **World Health Organization: Mental disorders - https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/mental-disorders**

Engaging the participants until the course ends ensures they would benefit from it to the highest possible degree.

The MEDIATE project partnership believes these 3 stages represent the whole cycle of working with people with mental disabilities, covering the entire process from reaching the target group when they don't know about our educations - toengaging them.

The practical methods of working with the target group have been compiled by the project partnership and organised in accordance to these 3 stages, with:

- Reaching and attracting people corresponding **to marketing / communication** methods
- Motivating people and involving them to start education corresponding to psychological methods
- Engaging the participants during the educational process corresponding to pedagogical methods

The compilation of the methods and tools from all of the three categories is presented below.

3.1 Marketing methods and tools (to reach and attract)

Title of the method / tool	Word of mouth marketing
Type of the method / tool	*Marketing*

Description of the method / tool

Word-of-mouth marketing, word of mouth advertising, Buzz marketing or Viral marketing. As can be read from the name, the method is based on oral marketing communication between people. It is distinct from the natural oral world, as in storytelling, folklore or other oral traditions but has a strong connection to each other.

Word-of-mouth marketing, WOMM, is passing, verbal and informal information. Mainly about recommendations but also general information from one person to another. The method has evolved to consist mainly of three underlying structures or models: the organic inter consumer influence model, and the network coproduction model.

The organic inter consumer influence model is the simplest model where an organization has no influence on what is said or being reviewed and being passed forward to another consumer.

It is referred to being organic because it occurs naturally and occurs when the consumer wants to share their experience about a product or service.

The linear marketer influence model is about the idea that influential customers create conversations with potential customers and consumers about how a certain product can be beneficial for them.

The network coproduction model is about planting a seed for the consumer in a very specific way. The model encourages conversations between customers about a certain product through releasing information on a particular product. This manner is more focused on the written word through online activities, using blogs and online communities as sources in communicating the message of the product. It gives marketers the opportunity to control and manage word of mouth activity online. Further on, this model

Target group	*Word-of-mouth marketing* is applicable to most students *with various disabilities or their relatives.* *Because the form of marketing can be a natural part in everyday life with the spoken and written word it embraces most people.*

Application

Word of mouth is a very inclusive way of spreading marketing to the groups. Because the method takes part from ordinary life when people communicate with each other, it can easily integrate in ordinary life. By creating a good product or service, it can be easy for the participant to talk about and recommend the business to those close to them.

To attract a broader group there is a possibility to engage through the written word.

Innovative features	● *Easy way to communicate* ● *Natural way to distribute information.* ● *Can be both oral and readable information* ● *Have the possibility to spread information at an exponential rate.* ● *Benefits a project extra well if an influential participant spreads the word.*

Detailed instructions

The Adult educator have different options for different kind of participants they want to reach.

- Networking & Loyalty marketing: - Our staff can build a trusted network of people with disabilities. *It could be beneficial to identify active and influential participants in the group to build the word of trust and therefore make it more prone to spread further.*
- Spreading rumors - *The easiest way is to spread the word among an already existing group that take part of the course or a similar one.*
- Influencer marketing (our staff becomes an influencer) - *Of course, it is important that the adult educator has goodwill in the group and can show the benefit of the course towards the recipient. Good news with a well-built foundation always travels further.*
- Referring / Evangelism marketing - Collaborators, volunteers and relatives are an excellent way to talk about and spread the word.

Equipment / resources / materials	*Blog, social media or related communities*
Advantages of the method / tool	*For students:* ● *Non intrusive marketing* ● *Everyday communication* ● *Finding information like what friends attends.* *For educators:* ● *Simple way of marketing through rumor* ● *Could spread fast among the targeted group* ● *Could be in both spoken word or written.* *For adult education institutions:* ● *It could be a cheap way of marketing*
More information about the method / tool	More information about the method is available in Swedish: *Word of mouth - Lund University Publications* *https://lup.lub.lu.se/luur/download?func=downloadFile&recordOId=1341375&fileOId=2435245*

Title of the method / tool	Partner(ship) marketing/ collaborative marketing techniques
Type of the method / tool	*marketing methods*

Description of the method / tool

Affiliate marketing - is a performance-based marketing method used by more and more businesses as a risk-free way to improve brand awareness, traffic and sales. A publicist (affiliate) generates attention and sales for an advertiser (brand, e-tailer or business) by promoting the advertiser's services to their target audience and thereby receives a commission on the sales they generate.
Cross-promotion may involve two or more companies working together in promoting a service or product, in a way that benefits both.
Referral partnerships and/or word of mouth is a business partnership whherein one recommends a particular company and its services in exchange for something of value.
Distributing partner s differentiate themselves — their expertise can help you towards the specific group

Target group	*The target group receives very targeted and specific information directly from partners often with specific groups or knowledge.*

Application

- Contacting other organizations to attend places with high representation of the target group
- Marketing through partner organizations that have a lot of connections to the actual people
- Marketing through social workers and other authority representatives working with the target group
- A calendar where events are shown and where people from all kinds of organizations can put their events that will help people to find things interesting to them
- Working together with people who meet the target group in different ways: having contact with different authorities, the municipality, with schools, curators, the healthcare representatives etc. and engaging them to promote our activities

Innovative features	• Cost of promotion is less • Win–win situation for both parties • Cross-promotion marketing is the easiest and often one of the most successful marketing strategies • Both businesses can promote themselves simultaneously • *Specific partner knowledge that reaches a new group* • *Create goodwill through partners*

Detailed instructions

Equipment / resources / materials	*Email, regular promotion, network.*
Advantages of the method / tool	*For educators:* ● *Easy and cheap way of reaching out to each other's networks* ● *Often network based and strengthening the co-op* ● *Expand a subject through collaborative organizations* *For adult education institutions:* ● Cost of promotion is less ● Win–win situation for both parties ● Cross-promotion marketing is the easiest and often one of the most successful marketing strategies ● Both businesses can promote themselves simultaneously
More information about the method / tool	N/A

Title of the method / tool	Informational Events
Type of the method / tool	*Communications = to reach and attract*

Description of the method / tool

Two types:
1. Informational events on different education institutions or social offers for youth
2. *Info events* at the premises of the organization where people can come and hear more about the activities.

It is important to have a spokesperson who has passion and knowledge about the target group. It should be the teacher who are going to teach the specific offer. When introducing the nonformal education offers, it is recommended to have a positive and appreciative approach (Appreciative Inquiry) when working with vulnerable people.

Target group	*This applies for vulnerable people in general.*

Application

Why included in the guide? Describe how the method helps to reach / attract / motivate / involve / engage people with mental disabilities

Type 1 is included in the guide as it can be effective to approach the target group in their daily environment.
Type 2 can be a tool that helps demystify and help create knowledge about the location as it can be difficult for some people to attend new places.

Innovative features	● *Visual material*
	● *Flyers*
	● *Examples of education offers*

Detailed instructions

List the steps to implement the method / tool:
1. The professionals working with the target group can prepare them for the upcoming event.
2. The event is well prepared and completed.
3. The professionals will follow up after the event and reflect with the group on the content of the event.

Equipment / resources / materials needed	● PowerPoint ● Inspiring material related to the nonformal education offers ● Flyers ● Etc.
Advantages of the method / tool	● *The target group obtains knowledge about the different offers* ● *Inspiration for the target group* ● *The method creates trust and makes the target group feel more comfortable.* ● *Through the three steps the target group has the possibility to create a relation to the teacher of the specific offer.*
More information about the method / tool	*N/A*

3.2 Psychological methods and tools (to motivate and involve to start education)

Title of the method / tool	Familiar locations
Type of the method / tool	*Psychological = to motivate and involve to start education*

Description of the method / tool
It might be easier to get the target group involved in education offers if the activities are placed on locations that are familiar to the target group. This way, they will not have to use a large amount of energy on getting to know a new place and trying to get comfortable there. Instead, they can focus their energy on the activity itself.

Target group	*This applies to vulnerable people in general – of course with exceptions.*

Application
The method is included in the guide as it will be possible to engage several people with different disabilities. By having the activities in familiar locations, it will provide comfortability and safety.

Innovative features	*N/A*

Detailed instructions

List the steps to implement the method / tool:
1. It is important to create a good cooperation between the nonformal education offer and the social offers since it can/will create a bridge between the target group and the nonformal offers.

Equipment / resources / materials needed	N/A
Advantages of the method / tool	*Creates safety and comfortability which can raise the participation numbers* *We can also raise the participation numbers by meeting them in their own environment*
More information about the method / tool	*N/A*

Title of the method / tool	Creating positive learner-centered environment
Type of the method / tool	*Psychological*

Description of the method / tool

Positive learner-centered environment - *Student-centered learning gives students the opportunity to decide what material they learn and how they learn it. "In positive learning environments students experience a high level of trust amongst themselves and their instructor. They view decisions as fair, they have a sense of belonging, and they feel listened to. Only in these environments are students able to tackle challenges, take risks, express themselves and ask for help."*

A student-centered classroom is one where the teacher takes the role of facilitator and guides the student to more independent learning. By exploring different strategies such as assessment, reflection and grouping that help in this type of learning environment.

In a student-centered classroom, assessment data should always drive instruction. Because instruction is student-centered, it is constantly adapted to reflect what individual students need.

Target group	*Can be used with students with various mental disabilities. Effective method for students with ADHD where they themselves can adapt their learning rate. Students feel physically and emotionally safe*

Application

- Individual in the center approach
- Providing a trusted contact who can help potential participants overcome barriers preventing them from coming
- Creating a genuine community around something that people can belong to (because people want to be in a group that they like)
- Create a good environment to make people want to come
- The staff should act as "buddies" and not remind bureaucratic authorities.
- Working together with people who meet our target groups and ensuring that they are included (those who want to help out to try to make it less hard to join).
- Provide maximum information to the target group regarding what they're signing up for
- Working together with the groups you're trying to reach to actually make sure that your welcoming and opening space is welcoming and opening for these kinds of groups
- Conduct participant evaluations frequently to obtain feedback and let people know you care
- Meeting people, going out, reaching out, partnering up with people who also help in an informal way to make it actually inclusive
- Having good group leadership without being dominating to allow people to open up; non-judgmental environment

Innovative features	- *Continuous commitment during the task* - *Student-centered.* - *Provides deeper understanding, confidence and empowerment* - Increases students' attention and focus. - Promotes meaningful learning experiences.

	• Encourages higher levels of student performance. • Motivates students to practice higher-level critical thinking skills.
Detailed instructions	

In a student-centered classroom, students are the focus of education, while teachers facilitate learning and help students reflect and take responsibility for their education. There are several strategies to ensure that a classroom environment is student-centered.

Learning about the students. It can be accomplished in a variety of ways. Each student can fill out a short fact sheet about themselves, where there are different yes or no questions written for their reading level. Send home a more in-depth sheet that parents or guardians can fill out. Learns about students' interests, abilities, and personalities.
In the beginning, create ice-breaking activities that help get to know the students better.
With this information, it is easier to design lessons that appeal to each student in the room.

Promote reflection, Meet with students after the course to discuss their performance. Students who do well often come up with reasons why they think they succeeded. Students who may not have succeeded as well are encouraged to think about what they can change about their learning to improve. Through this process, students develop self-reflection skills essential to a student-centered classroom.

Assessment and encouraging exploration - Through assessment data it's easier to determine what the student needs to succeed.

Equipment / resources / materials	*Very individual and personalized equipment targeted towards the student.*
Advantages of the method / tool	*For students:* • *Brings out specifically what the student needs.* • *Helping students become responsible for their own learning.* • Motivates students to practice higher-level critical thinking skills. *For educators:* • *The educator learns to know the student* • *Facilitate learning and help students reflect and take responsibility for their education* *For adult education institutions:* • Promotes meaningful learning experiences.
More information about the method / tool	*Learning Environments* *https://www.buffalo.edu/catt/develop/teach/learning-environments.html*

	Welcoming learners with disabilities in quality learning environments: a tool to support countries in moving towards inclusive education *https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000380256*

Title of the method / tool	Companionship of a trusted person
Type of the method / tool	• *Psychological = to motivate and involve to start education* • *Pedagogical = to engage during the process*

Description of the method / tool

An acknowledged and effective tool for creating motivation is having a trusted person accompanying the vulnerable person. It could be a friend, mentor, caregiver, teacher, job counsellor or similar. When having a trusted person by his/her side, it can help the person feel secure and become more open to the new positive input which the activity might bring.

Target group	*This applies to vulnerable people in general.*

Application

This method can help the target group enter new and unfamiliar grounds. They avoid the feeling of being alone and having to perform for people who they do not know. In this way, the support person can build bridge between the new activity and the participant. It can also help him/her become more confident to go further on his/her own.

Innovative features	• *Bridgebuilding* • *Companionship* • *Motivational qualities* • *Generates a reassuring and secure environment.*

Detailed instructions

1. Introduce the participant to the activity *2. Accompany him/her to the activity a various set of times.* *3. Joint evaluation: the vulnerable participant, the support person, and the person in charge of the activity.*	
Equipment / resources / materials needed	Investment of time is essential.
Advantages of the method / tool	• *Greater probability that he/she will return and participate in the activity again.* • *The vulnerable person is met at eye level and you focus on his/her starting point.*
More information about the method / tool	*NA*

3.3 Pedagogical methods and tools (to engage during the process)

Title of the method	Nordic study circle as a 3rd learning place
Type of the method / tool	*Pedagogical*

Description of the method / tool
A study circle is a small group of people who meet multiple times to discuss an issue. In a study circle, a small group (often 3–10 people) meets to learn something together. All study circles have a leader, a study plan for what they want to achieve and some type of study material. The study circle has at least three meetings, but often lasts longer.
Study circles represent third learning places. So-called "third places" are the "anchors" of community life that facilitate and foster broader, more creative interaction (Oldenburg). Third learning place is where one can learn in a non-formal relaxing public environment, while making new acquaintances and encountering familiar faces.
Having a third place is of higher importance for people with mental disabilities, as many representatives of this target group may feel isolated having difficult situation at home, lack of job, and few friends as a result of their disability.

Target group	*Representatives of people with any kind of mental disability can benefit from participating in a study circle. It especially concerns those facing social exclusion, as study circles being a third place provide their participants with new social circle*

Application
(Swedish) study circles aim to make it possible for an increased diversity of people to influence their life situation and create engagement to participate in the development of society. *This is highly actual especially for people with mental disabilities, as this target group often needs extra support in the domains of both their private and social life. Study circles are often organized to analyze and find solutions to common problems (including social or community issues). They aim to increase knowledge, provide access to culture and individual cultural expression, and enhance personal and social development.* *Thanks to these features, study circles aren't just attractive to people with mental disabilities, but have the potential to involve and engage them in the education.*

Innovative features	*People learn together and from each other* *Neutral ground* *A low profile, leveling place* *Conversation is the main activity.* *Accessibility and accommodation* *The mood is playful* *A home away from home*

Detailed instructions

Study circles as self-organised courses, have the following format:	
• *Anyone can start a study circle, while adult education institutions can support interested people in multiple ways* • *Study circles are typically created by persons who discover a common interest* • *There is no teacher, but one member acts as facilitator (study circle leader)* • *The learning takes place thanks to participant's active engagement, discussions and teaching each other* *The implementation of a study circle can be divided into three general phases:* *1. Formation of the circle* • *Initiation* • *Deciding on the theme and focus, drafting study circle plan, setting learning objectives* • *Recruitment of participants, discussing common expectations* • *Choosing the study circle leader* • *Arranging practical conditions (setting the first meeting and further schedule, making the premises accessible, creating a permissive and reflective environment and so on)* *2. Focus on the tasks and co-creation* *The phase may or may not include some of the following:* • *Joint exercises,* • *Study visits and various types of activity visits with observations and reflections* • *A log, where participants make personal notes about their thoughts, ideas, reflections on experiences – in order to put the acquired knowledge into words* • *Reflective teams, where participants discuss and reflect on each other's work* • *Supervision of each other's mini-projects to develop a practice,* • *Reading common literature, which is followed by a discussion in the circle* • *And so on* *The phase must include reconciliation and commitments (each circle meeting ends with reconciliation, joint reflections, agreements on commitments during the time between meetings and planning of the next meeting as well as the "homework").* *3. Closing phase* *The phase consists main of evaluations of the circle's work and participants' individual knowledge attained*	

Equipment / resources / materials	*Study plan, and study materials*
Advantages of the method / tool	• *no teacher, the staff should act as "buddies"* • *everyone is equal* • *participants decide what they will study* • *relaxing environment* • *socialising and belonging to a group* • *creating a genuine community around something that people can belong to (because people want to be in a group that they like)* • *having good group leadership without being dominating to allow people to open up; non-judgment mental environment*

More information about the method / tool	More information:
	Handbook: Learning circles in a Nordic context (in Swedish): *https://nvl.org/Content/Handbok* ***The Impact of Third Places on Community Quality of Life (Jeffres, Leo W.; Bracken, Cheryl C.; Jian, Guowei; Casey, Mary F.)*** *https://engagedscholarship.csuohio.edu/cgi /viewcontent.cgi?article=1011&context=clcom_facpub*

Title of the method	**Problem-Based Learning (PBL)**
Type of the method / tool	*Pedagogical*

Description of the method / tool

In Problem-based learning, groups are presented with contextual situations and asked to define the problem, decide what skills and resources are necessary to investigate the problem, and then pose possible solutions (Duch, Groh, and Allen, 2001).
Problem-based learning is based on reality-centered situations that are often given as a short but multifaceted description or image. The learning process assumes that the learner must understand and explain phenomena and how these are connected in a larger context. The studies are thematic and thus integrate several subjects and aspects.

Target group	*Problem-based learning can be used with students with various mental disabilities. PBL instruction must be adapted for each specific disability: individualized instruction or extensive teacher collaboration may be required.*
	The method has proved to be especially effective for students with ADHD

Application

PBL is a pedagogical method for meaningful inclusion. Not only PBL employs project design elements and teaching practices that are also known to best serve students with a wide range of disabilities, but it also provides opportunities for creativity, art, creating something meaningful. PBL prompts students to feel that the group is meaningful and that there is a chance for doing something within the context of the group to develop their creativity or whatever one would enjoy doing. PBL creates engaging and dynamic learning environment from day 1, as finding a solution to a problem engages in the process and creates motivation to continue with the course.

Innovative features	● *Student-centered, adult educator only supervises*
	● *Continuous commitment during the task*
	● *Promotes cooperation, problem solving, creativity, critical thinking and curiosity*
	● *Provides deeper understanding, confidence and empowerment*
	● *Improves teamwork and interpersonal skills*
	● *Development of transferable skills*

Detailed instructions

Adult educator must find or design a problem or a case that would fit their students with a specific mental disability. The students are split into groups of 6-9 person and are offered to review the proposed situation.

It is followed by the actual problem-solving with a start-up, time for knowledge acquisition and an end, where the group's collective knowledge helps to solve the case. Adult educator facilitates the process, guiding the students through the following steps:

Step 1: Clarify terms and concepts
Step 2: Identify problems
Step 3: Produce ideas
Step 4: Generate hypotheses
Step 5: Formulate learning objectives
Step 6: Acquire knowledge

Step 7: Problem solving *Depending on the group, the steps can be adapted, simplified, or omitted. For example, after reviewing the case, the adult educator can propose to the group to discuss the following:* ● *What is the case about?* ● *Your free associations* ● *Define the problem* ● *Define your learning objective (what you can learn from this problem and its solution)* ● *Discuss solutions* ● *Think about what you have learned by solving the problem* *Importantly, the teacher's role is to be a supervisor in the learning process and it is the students who are responsible for the group's learning. Both individual and the group's learning process is evaluated during and/or after the session.*	

Equipment / resources / materials	*Projector, pens and paper, printouts (if needed)*
Advantages of the method / tool	*For students:* ● *Students usually find it fun to participate* ● *It encourages greater understanding* ● *Students with PBL experience rate their abilities higher* ● *PBL promotes lifelong learning* *For educators:* ● *Course attendance increases* ● *The method provides more internal reward* ● *It encourages students to spend more time studying* ● *It promotes interdisciplinarity* *For adult education institutions:* ● *It makes student learning a priority* ● *It can make it easier to keep students in the classroom* ● *It can be seen as evidence that an institution values teaching*
More information about the method / tool	More information about the method is available in Swedish: ***Problembaserat lärande - pedagogisk idé och metod (Charlotte Silén, Hälsouniversitet)*** *https://old.liu.se/medfak/ssk/distriktsskoterska/hogerspalt /1.66519/PBL_informationsskrift.pdf* ***PBL som didaktisk metod i vuxenutbildning (Christina Allgulander, Malmö Högskola)*** *http://mau.diva-portal.org/smash/get/diva2:1494767/FULLTEXT01.pdf* ***De sju stegen i problembaserat lärande (Lunds Universitet):*** *https://moodle.med.lu.se/pluginfile.php/104100/mod_resource /content/1/Sju%20stegen.pdf*

Title of the method / tool	Learning through argumentation
Type of the method / tool	*Choose out of 3:* ● *Pedagogical = to engage during the process*

Description of the method / tool
Learning through argumentation is a method of teaching and learning that emphasizes the use of critical thinking and reasoning skills. It involves presenting different perspectives or arguments on a topic and encouraging students to engage in a dialogue in order to evaluate the evidence and reasoning behind each perspective. The goal is to help students develop their ability to analyze and evaluate arguments and form their own well-reasoned opinions. Learning through argumentation can help students attend to contrasting ideas, which can deepen their learning

Target group	***Suitable for all***

Application
Learning through argumentation can be an effective way to reach, attract, motivate, involve, and engage people with mental disabilities in several ways: *People with mental disabilities may be motivated to participate in argumentation activities because they provide an engaging and interactive way to learn. It can also increase the learners motivation to learn, by allowing them to see the relevance of what they are studying and feel a sense of achievement in defending their ideas.* *By actively participating in arguments and debates, people with mental disabilities can feel more involved in the learning process and develop a deeper understanding of the subject matter.* *Overall, learning through argumentation can provide people with mental disabilities with a supportive and inclusive learning environment where they can develop their critical thinking and communication skills.*

Innovative features	*List in bullet points* ● *Active engagement* ● *Critical thinking* ● *Collaboration* ● *Inclusivity* ● *Feedback* ● *Communication skills*

Detailed instructions

List the steps to implement the method / tool: ● *Choose a topic that is relevant and interesting to your students and one that can be approached from multiple perspectives. Research and gather information about the topic and determine the different perspectives and arguments that can be made.* ● *Provide students with a clear and concise overview of the topic and the arguments that will be presented.* ● *Divide students into groups or pairs and assign them a specific perspective or argument to defend.* ● *Encourage students to engage in argumentation activities, such as debates, discussions, or written arguments, to develop their understanding of the topic.* ● *Provide students with constructive feedback on their arguments, including their use of evidence and reasoning. Encourage students to reflect on their argumentation experience and how it has impacted their understanding of the topic.*	

Equipment / resources / materials needed	Topics to discuss, ways to explore different topics: internet connection, computer, newspapers, flyers etc.
Advantages of the method / tool	*List in bullet points* ● *Critical thinking and problem-solving skills* ● *Communication skills* ● *Cooperation*
More information about the method / tool	*https://link.springer.com/referenceworkentry/10.1007/978-1-4419-1428-6_601* *The International Handbook of Collaborative Learning* *Cindy Hmelo-Silver, Clark Chinn, Carol Chan, Angela O'Donnell* *2013New York* *Routledge* *doi.org/10.4324/9780203837290* *https://www.taylorfrancis.com/books/edit/10.4324/9780203837290/international-handbook-collaborative-learning-cindy-hmelo-silver-angela-donnell-clark-chinn-carol-chan?refId=45ed68a6-bb7f-404b-96b8-7c6e8687856d&context=ubx*

Title of the method / tool	Analytics of Emotions
Type of the method / tool	● *Pedagogical = to engage during the process*

Description of the method / tool

Summarize what the method / tool consists in

During the activity, make sure to be attentive to how the participants meet themselves, others, and the world to help them thrive in the process and find new ways of handling personal challenges. It is recommended to apply and combine ACT tools (acceptance and commitment therapy) and a Recovery approach.

ACT is a method that helps the individual in the direction of the meaningful life without distress, depression, and discouragement.

The Recovery process is about creating a meaningful and satisfying life, based on the individual's own definition of a good life.

Example: have a conversation with the participant about their challenges and offer them another approach to the learning situation. Talk about his/her emotions, thoughts and barriers and provide his/her with other ways of looking at the situation. Show him/her an accepting and inclusive approach.

Target group	*This applies to the target group in general.*

Application

Why included in the guide? Describe how the method helps to reach / attract / motivate / involve / engage people with mental disabilities

By using this method, you offer the participants an accepting and inclusive approach to themselves and life in general. This can help transform their sometimes self-destructing mindset to a more constructive and compassioned way of living.

Innovative features	*List in bullet points* ● Coaching ● Role playing ● Reflection ● Self-assessment ● Real life examples and scenarios ● Performance improvement ● Assess strengths/weaknesses ● Journaling behavior
Detailed instructions	

1. Make sure that the activity can fit all. *2.* Present the activity to the participants and make sure that they know that the framework of the activity is very broad and inclusive. *3.* During the activity pay attention to the individual development of each participant.	
Equipment / resources / materials needed	N/A
Advantages of the method / tool	*List in bullet points* ● *The participants can feel seen and heard* ● *There is room for all* ● *It may ensure personal development*
More information about the method / tool	*If available, please provide literature / web resource containing more information about the method / tool* *ACT:* - *Russ Harris, "Lykkefælden: stop kampen, lev livet", 2010* - *https://thehappinesstrap.com/* *Recovery:* - *https://vidensportal.dk/voksne/recovery* - *https://www.researchintorecovery.com/*

Title of the method / tool	Crossover learning
Type of the method / tool	● *Pedagogical = to engage during the process*

Description of the method / tool

The concept of crossover learning refers to a learning that bridges formal and informal learning settings. These connections work in both directions. The goal is to apply the knowledge and skills learned in one context to a different context, allowing learners to more easily understand and apply what they have learned. This can for example be done by incorporating real-world examples and projects across different subjects, or by teaching interdisciplinary courses that combine multiple subjects. The learning can take place in informal settings, such as in museums or on a field trip.

Target group	*Suits everyone*

Application

Why included in the guide? Describe how the method helps to reach / attract / motivate / involve / engage people with mental disabilities Thinking outside the bounds of formal education requires a certain amount of creativity. Giving learners freedom to explore, to make mistakes and to fully understand and at the same time build not only competence, but also confidence in themselves.

Innovative features	*List in bullet points* ● *Learning in informal settings –with informal discussions.* ● *Learning from everyday life can raise interest for further learning*

Detailed instructions

List the steps to implement the method / tool:
1. *Assess the needs, ability and interests of each learner in order to find out how to pair them.*
2. *Encourage the paired learners to work together and support one another.*
3. *Propose a question or a problem in the classroom/within the group*
4. *The problem can be solved or the question answered informal setting such as museum or on a field trip.*
5. *The solution/answer can be collected in an untraditional way such as through photography, taking notes, asking around etc.*
6. *The outcome can also be presented in an untraditional way.*
7. *Encourage learners to reflect on their learning and their experience and identify areas for improvement.*

Equipment / resources / materials needed	*MuseumS or other informal settings where the crossover learning can take place, equipment such as camera, art supplies, computer ets. Open mind and creative thinking*

Advantages of the method / tool	List in bullet points ● *Sparks creativity* ● *Builds confidence* ● *Makes learning fun and creative* ● *Connects learning and daily life* ● *Can enhance interest and motivation to learn* ● *Provides engaging and effective learning experience*
More information about the method / tool	*If available, please provide literature / web resource containing more information about the method / tool* *https://www.aace.org/review/crossover-learning/* *Practical Pedagogy Practical Pedagogy* *40 New Ways to Teach and Learn* *Author: Mike Sharples* *2019 Routledge* *iSBN 9781138599819*

Title of the method / tool	Incidental Learning
Type of the method / tool	● *Pedagogical = to engage during the process*

Description of the method / tool
Incidental learning refers to the process of acquiring knowledge or information unconsciously and unplanned, while doing something else. It may occur while carrying out an activity that seems to be unrelated to what is learned. Incidental learning occurs when people are exposed to information in a way that is not intentional, but they still retain and remember it. This type of learning often takes place through everyday experiences and interactions, such as observing others, listening to conversations, or reading in passing.

Target group	*People with Anxiety Disorders, Autism or with low educational level, but suitable for everyone.*

Application
Unlike formal education, incidental learning is not led by a teacher and does not follow a structured curriculum. Incidental learning occurs naturally and without conscious effort, making it a more efficient and less forced way of acquiring new information and skills. This type of learning can also increase retention and comprehension of the learned material as it is often experienced in real-life situations and contexts.

Innovative features	*List in bullet points* ● *Personal* ● *Foster initiatives* ● *Can enrich personal experience and growth* ● *Can motivate person to learn* ● *Occurs naturally*

Detailed instructions
Here are some ways to practice incidental learning: ● *Be mindful of what you are exposed to in your daily life and try to take notice of things that you wouldn't typically pay attention to.* ● *Try new activities, go to new places, and meet new people to expose yourself to new information.* ● *Remember: the key to incidental learning is to not make it intentional, but rather let it happen unintentionally.*

Equipment / resources / materials needed	*Use all possible resources that are available such as: mobile phone, internet, surroundings, nature or colleagues*
Advantages of the method / tool	*List in bullet points* ● *New "organic" knowledge* ● *Informal* ● *Personal* ● *Relaxed and unintentional*
More information about the method / tool	*https://effectiviology.com/incidental-learning/* *Incidental Learning and Long-Term Retention of New Word Meanings From Stories: The Effect of Number of Exposures* *Rachael C. Hulme, Daria Barsky, Jennifer M. Rodd* *https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1111/lang.12313*

Title of the method / tool	Peer teaching
Type of the method / tool	● *Pedagogical = to engage during the process*

Description of the method / tool

Peer teaching is a method of learning where students teach each other what they have learned. This can take for example place in informal study groups, where students help each other understand course material, or through more structured activities, such as presentations by students, to their peers on a particular topic. The goal of peer teaching is to provide an opportunity for students to deepen their own understanding of the material, as well as help their peers.

Target group	*Suitable for everyone*

Application

Peer-led study groups: students work together to understand and review course material.
Peer tutoring: students take turns teaching each other on specific topics or subjects.
Peer feedback: students give each other constructive feedback on projects, assignments, or presentations.

Innovative features	● *Active engagement* ● *Critical thinking* ● *Collaboration* ● *Inclusivity*

Detailed instructions

● *Decide on the format of the peer teaching, such as student-led discussions or small group activities*
● *Assign students to specific roles, such as facilitators or presenters, and provide clear expectations for their participation.*
● *Encourage students to provide constructive feedback to each other after each peer teaching activity, to help improve their skills and knowledge.*
● *Evaluate the peer teaching process regularly, and get feedback from students to see what is working well and what could be improved.*

Equipment / resources / materials needed	Particular topic, and two or more students that are willing to participate

Advantages of the method / tool	● *Increase self-esteem/confidence* ● *Inclusive* ● *Can deepen understanding and knowledge*
More information about the method / tool	*https://www.opencolleges.edu.au/informed/features/peer-teaching* *https://www.alibris.com/Teaching-Through-Peer-Interaction-Rebecca-Adams/book/41209507?* *Teaching through Peer Interaction* *By Rebecca Adams, Rhonda Oliver* *1st Edition,2019 New York* *DOIhttps://doi.org/10.4324/9781315115696* *https://www.researchgate.net/publication/352403856_Implementation_of_Peer-Teaching_Learning_Methods_to_Improve_the_Students'_Learning_Outcomes_on_Features_of_ModernContemporary_Art*

Title of the method / tool	Positive feedback to keep the target group motivated
Type of the method / tool	*Pedagogical = to engage during the process*

Description of the method / tool

Make sure to provide positive feedback during the process and comment on the successful things that they do. The feedback and support can help enforce their self-esteem and make them aware of their potential. It is recommended to have a positive and appreciative approach (Appreciative Inquiry) when working with vulnerable people.

Target group	*This applies to the target group in general.*

Application

Positive feedback and an appreciative approach are essential when working with vulnerable groups.

Innovative features	● *"Ask, not judge"*

Detailed instructions

1. Make an including and warm welcome when starting the activity.
2. Respect the boundaries of the participants
3. Through the whole activity, make sure to listen and make sure not to focus on the process and not the results.
4. Make sure to say goodbye to each and every one, and express that you hope to see them next time.

Equipment / resources / materials needed	N/A
Advantages of the method / tool	*Can provide a strengthened self esteem* *Can give a higher potential for the individual* *Can ensure that the participants keep attending the activity*
More information about the method / tool	*David Cooperrider, "Appreciative Inquiry – a positive revolution in change", 2005* *Per Revstedt, "The Motivational Relationship", 2014* *https://revstedtblog.com/*

3.4 Good practices (Denmark, Iceland, Sweden)

Learning Nordic best practices can help one's organisation or project by providing new ideas and different perspectives. It can also help avoid common mistakes and improve the overall quality of one's work.

Within the current guide 3 best practices of working with the target group of people with mental disabilities are provided: one practice from Denmark, Iceland, and one from Sweden. The proposed best practices illustrate one or several of the methods of working with the target group, presented in this Guide.

Best practice 1 – The inclusion and participation of vulnerable citizens in volunteer communities, Aarhus 2018

Stakeholders

Sager der Samler, Aarhus: The English name for Sager der Samler is "Citizen Change". It's a place and a platform for citizen led change, run independently as a community of people who support each other in taking initiative and acting on problems and situations from their own lives. The result is courage, agency and initiatives that renew society and democracy on a local scale.

The Municipality of Aarhus – the Social Affairs and Employment Committee

Aim of the project

This project strived to get more vulnerable citizens to become "everyday activists" and/or participate in volunteer activities through the platform, Sager der Samler. The aim was to strengthen vulnerable citizens and their democratic participation as well as contribute to making the local community more inclusive towards vulnerable citizens.

To achieve this, Sager der Samler put in extra efforts to reach vulnerable citizens and get them involved in their local activities in Aarhus. They made direct contact with the target group as well as found ambassadors and 'bridge builders' among people who work with or have contact with vulnerable citizens daily. Furthermore, they also strengthened their hosting efforts and made it easier and more accessible for new people to participate. Sager der Samler started up new initiatives, helped them take form and helped the participants built up a network.

Some of the key results: Sager der Samler experienced an increase in the number of vulnerable participants. Vulnerable citizen groups participated in activities and gatherings, and often made up 25 % of the participants. Most people who decided to participate were invited through network in their local community. They were often motivated by getting a network and by experiencing support within one of their personal areas of interest. The support and network mean that they can act on experienced challenges together with others.

You can read more about the project here:
- Informational flyer, 2018
- Report by VIVE, 2018

Best practice – 2 month valuation course ("Matsbraut") for people with various needs - Reykjavik

This valuation course is intended for people dealing with various challenges, such as; unemployment, reduced work capacity (due to disability, illness, injury, etc.), addiction. The course is suitable for people who want to increase their daily activity, want to go back to school or work and need to establish a better daily routine. The course is intended for both Icelandic and non-native speakers.

The main goal of the course is to increase daily activity and evaluate:
- How realistic it is for the individual to continue or start targeted rehabilitation.
- What kind of work or education is suitable.
- What kind of support the individual needs to reach their goals.

And also to:
- Break social isolation and help individuals build a support system.
- Make everyone feel welcome and empowered.
- To encourage participants to realize where their strength lies, to focus on what they can do instead of what they cannot.

Individuals and/or their consultants can apply for the course through *VIRK Vocational Rehabilitation Fund*, *The Directorate of Labour*, or individually. Admission is open year round, for it is important to catch individuals when they need the support.

The course consists of:
- Interviews and check ups with a case manager, teacher, occupational therapist, guidance counsellor and social worker.
- Group classes four times per week, for 90 minutes. Classes include; Icelandic, computer skills, mathematics, yoga, self-empowerment, outdoor education, group work, lessons about stress, balance in daily life, social skills, routine, etc.

Best practice 3. The Orda project: creative writing for people with intellectual disabilities – Uppsala, Sweden

Orda groups

The project aimed to give the target group the opportunity to tell their life stories or otherwise express themselves literarily. The project ran Orda groups in which people with intellectual disabilities had the opportunity to develop their ability to express themselves creatively, primarily through writing. Special efforts were made to include people from the target group who have an ethnic background other than Swedish.

The Orda project worked with creative writing in workshop form with different approaches and methods. Project worked in text and sound (spoken narrative). Photo, image and illustration were used where it was pedagogically motivated as well as in documentation and exhibition.

Anthology and exhibition

The writing included different expressions such as poetry, essays, short prose and drama. The texts were collected in an anthology and were also presented in various forms in an exhibition. The exhibition had been touring all eight municipalities in Uppsala County and at each location the participants were involved in organising presentations and openings.

The participant who took responsibility for an Orda group received a specialised circle leader training.

The aim of the project was to empower the target group through creative processes and to provide the general public with insights into the needs of the target group through aesthetic experiences. The project collected the Orda groups' materials on a digital platform so that participants had more opportunities to have their materials read. The material produced in the project, including the study plan and manuals, are freely provided and disseminated by Studiefrämjandet, which will continue to support existing and new Orda groups. The Literature Centre in Uppsala will continue to manage and develop the platform after the end of the project.

Recommendations on organisation of a course (or a study circle)

4. Recommendations on organisation of a course (or a study circle)

4.1 Tips for group dynamics

1. Establish clear roles and responsibilities. Assign specific tasks and responsibilities to each member of the group, and make sure that everyone knows what is expected of them.
2. Encourage open communication. Encourage group members to share their ideas and concerns openly, and create a safe and respectful environment where everyone feels heard and valued.
3. Foster collaboration and cooperation. Encourage group members to work together and support each other, rather than competing or trying to dominate.
4. Manage conflict effectively. When conflicts or disagreements arise, encourage group members to listen to each other, respect different viewpoints, and try to find a mutually acceptable resolution.
5. Seek feedback and support. Encourage group members to provide feedback and support to each other, and encourage open and honest communication about any challenges or difficulties that may arise.
6. Encourage individual and group accountability. Make sure that group members are held accountable for their contributions and responsibilities, and encourage a sense of shared ownership and commitment to the group's goals.

Overall, improving group dynamics requires establishing clear roles and responsibilities, fostering open communication and collaboration, managing conflict effectively, and encouraging individual and group accountability.

4.2 Ideas for group work to activate all the students

1. Jigsaw activity. In this activity, students are divided into small groups and each group is assigned a different topic or task. Each group then becomes an expert on their topic and teaches it to the rest of the class.

2. Role-play. This activity involves students taking on different roles or perspectives and engaging in a simulated scenario or situation. This can be a fun and interactive way to explore complex issues or ideas.
3. Collaborative problem-solving. In this activity, students work together to solve a real-world problem or challenge, using critical thinking and problem-solving skills.
4. Group debate. This activity involves students taking different sides of an issue or argument and presenting their viewpoints in a structured debate format.
5. Collaborative art or design project. This activity involves students working together to create a visual or artistic project, such as a mural, a collage, or a model.

Overall, group work activities can be a great way to engage and activate all students, and they can provide opportunities for students to learn from each other, develop new skills, and practice teamwork

4.3 Soft skills

1. Model the behavior you want to see: As a teacher or mentor, it's important to demonstrate the soft skills you want your students to learn.
2. Encourage group work: Group work can be a great way for students to practice communication, collaboration, and conflict resolution skills.
3. Encourage students to practice active listening: This involves paying attention to what others are saying, asking clarifying questions, and providing feedback.
4. Provide opportunities for students to lead: Leading a group or presenting in front of others can help students develop leadership skills and confidence.
5. Encourage students to try new things: Taking on new challenges can help students build resilience, adaptability, and problem-solving skills.
6. Encourage empathy and perspective-taking: Helping students understand and relate to the experiences and perspectives of others can enhance their social and emotional intelligence.
7. Use role-playing and other experiential activities: These can be effective ways to help students practice and develop soft skills in a safe and supportive environment.

5. Recommendations for adjusting non-formal adult education offer to vulnerable groups

- **Communication strategies and direct communication with the target group:**

Talk to the people that you are trying to reach to find out what is necessary to engage them in your activities. This will create trust and hopefully establish a sustainable relationship where the participants will show up in other contexts as well without having to ask them. It is important to provide the target group with in-depth information about the different offers (both about activities that only target vulnerable people, but also the activities that are open to everyone). Some of them do not know where to find the courses or activities, and others simply do not have knowledge about the different possibilities. Be curious on the specific needs of the vulnerable groups, for instance by assessing their current level of education, language proficiency, hobbies, and if there are any specific skills they need/want to acquire.

- **Variation of non-formal adult education offers and their structure:**

The offers must come in different forms to reach all individuals in the target group. It is important that people with disabilities have both opportunities e.g., participating in a class with peers and/or participating in a class with people without disabilities. Some vulnerable groups need a certain framework to be able to learn, which might not apply to people without disabilities. Some people feel more comfortable attending activities that are specifically targeted towards their needs, whereas others prefer being among "normal" people. In activities with a mixed crowd of participants, it is important to have in mind that the extra need for consideration of the vulnerable groups can sometimes take away focus from the rest of the class. No matter how you structure the activity, make sure you create a welcoming atmosphere and be inclusive to all participants. Make sure to take into account the impact of trauma on the participants' ability to learn. This can include providing emotional support and resources, as well as creating a safe and non-threatening learning environment. If it is possible, provide flexible scheduling and options

for course delivery which can accommodate individuals with specific physical and psychological health needs.

- **Avoid practicing "us (educators) versus them (people with disabilities)".**

People with disabilities should be integrated in the learning process, rather than being taught and/or told what to do by people without disabilities. The activities will often benefit from having a flat group structure without a clear leader as it promotes a more relaxed and comfortable atmosphere where the participants can feel safe and be able to open up. People with disabilities can be assigned leadership roles, for instance study circle leaders, as it will then be experience and knowledge that defines the person who takes on the leading role.

- **Creating a feeling of ease and comfort by making sure a trusted person accompany him/her:**

It would be ideal if a trusted person (who the individual feels comfortable and safe around) introduce him/her to the non-formal adult education offers. It is unlikely that the target group will seek out the courses and activities by themselves. It is more plausible that they will join and even continue to attend the activity if a trusted person joins them the first couple of times (or more) e.g., a friend, a mentor, caregiver, or a job counsellor. The handheld effort is important when working with this target group.

- **Adapt the content and the delivery of the education:**

This can include creating materials in a language that the group is more comfortable with or adapt the content to be more relevant to their daily lives. Continuously evaluate and adjust the program to meet the needs of the participants in the best way. You should also involve the participants and ask them what they think could be improved and go from there.

For people on the Autism Spectrum, it can be an advantage to have a concrete framework that more or less stays the same. Some people prefer knowing the content and what to expect.

- **The schedule of the activities:**

As explained in the previous chapters, it requires a lot for people with mental disabilities to move outside their comfort zone and to meet new people. This means that they often use a lot of their spare time on recharging their energy level, both mentally and physically. It is a good idea to schedule your activity in a way where the participants still have time to recharge. For instance, it will be problematic for some people to attend activities right after school or other daily routines as they have already used most of their energy by then.

- **Overlapping of activities:**

It is recommendable to create an overlap between the daily routines of the vulnerable person and the non-formal education activities. It can be difficult for people with mental disabilities to join new activities they are not familiar. If they have already been introduced to the educator from the non-formal education activity during their normal routines (school, job, counselling etc.), they are more likely to join on their own. This can be in the form of an initial meeting where the potential educator will enter the environment of the target group and introduce himself/herself and present information about the specific activity.

- **Adjustment of the prices:**

Some offers are quite expensive for vulnerable people who often have a low income. To make the non-formal education offers more accessible to them, you should ensure as low prices as possible.